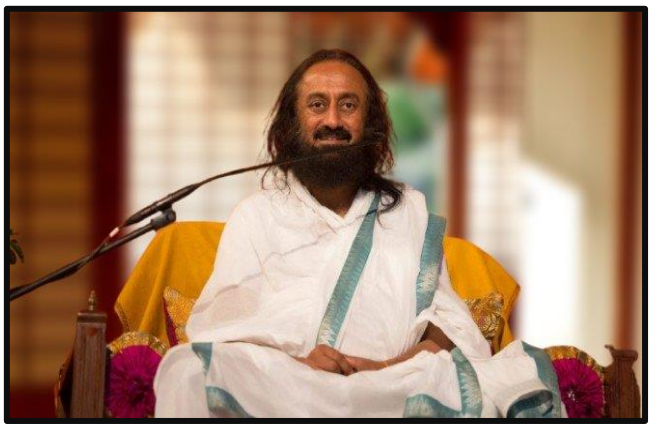

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

IS SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR ANTI-MUSLIM?

The Truth His Actions Reveal

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's Humanitarian Initiatives for the Muslim Community and the World

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Introduction

In a world increasingly divided by religious mistrust and political conflict, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder of the Art of Living Foundation, stands as a rare voice of inclusive compassion. Accusations that Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is "anti-Muslim" are not only false — they are contradicted by a rich and documented record of humanitarian engagement with Muslim communities across India and the world.

This document presents verified facts drawn directly from Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's own public actions, statements, and programs — particularly those undertaken in 2007–2008. The evidence speaks clearly: Sri Sri Ravi Shankar does not merely tolerate the Muslim community — he has actively championed their rights, stood on their platforms, and worked tirelessly for their peace and dignity.

1. Addressing the Largest Body of Muslim Clerics in India

One of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's most significant engagements with the Muslim world was his address as the **Chief Guest at the 29th National Meeting of the Jamiat-Ulema-i-Hind in Hyderabad** — the largest gathering of Muslim clerics in India, attended by over 6,000 Islamic scholars and religious leaders.

Sri Sri used this powerful platform to deliver a message of unity and hope, urging the assembled clerics to take an active role in steering Muslim youth away from extremism and terrorism. He appealed passionately for solidarity between the Hindu and Muslim communities, and within the diverse sects of Islam itself.

> *"The Shias and Sunnis are like two eyes of Islam and both should remain united. Unfortunately, Muslims are being branded as terrorists and this attempt can only be fought when the community remains united."*
> **— Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Jamiat-Ulema-i-Hind, Hyderabad**

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2. Resolving the Amarnath Land Crisis: Protecting the Muslim Community

In the summer of 2008, Jammu and Kashmir erupted in large-scale violence and protests over the sensitive Amarnath land transfer issue. At its core, the conflict threatened to become deeply communal — a dangerous fault line between the Hindu and Muslim communities of the region.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar stepped in as a mediator at a critical moment, convincing leaders from both sides to cease violence and return to the negotiating table. His message was unambiguous:

> *"Wherever Hindus are in majority, they need to protect the Muslims and vice versa."*
> **— Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Amarnath Land Crisis Mediation, 2008**

This statement alone demolishes any claim that Sri Sri is anti-Muslim. He explicitly championed the responsibility of the majority community to safeguard the minority — a profound affirmation of Muslim rights and security. His intervention helped de-escalate one of India's most tension-filled crises that year.

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3. Conference of Imams of India — Championing Muslim Voices

Sri Sri's interfaith commitment extended to direct engagement with Islamic leadership. His participation in the Conference of Imams of India was a demonstration of his willingness to sit with, listen to, and speak alongside Muslim religious leaders as equals in the pursuit of peace.

His message at such gatherings was always consistent: the root cause of violence is stress, misunderstanding, and ignorance — not religion. He advocated for a multi-cultural and multi-religious education that teaches the youth of every faith to see themselves first and foremost as members of a shared human family.

4. Reaching Out to Muslim-Majority Nations: Visiting Iraq

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar visited Iraq twice — in 2007 and again in 2008 — at a time when the country was torn apart by sectarian violence. He met with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, the Vice-President, Health Minister, and Youth Minister, sharing his vision of a violence-free Iraq built on reconciliation and harmony.

The Art of Living Foundation also launched trauma and stress-relief programs for the war-weary people of Iraq — a majority-Muslim nation — offering healing to civilians who had suffered unimaginable loss.

> *"The Iraqi people have suffered so much. The Art of Living Foundation is working to help reduce and eliminate stress so that the people can be joyful again."*
> **— Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Iraq Visit, 2008**

5. World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace

In Paris, France, Sri Sri participated in the 'Sacredness of Peace' Conference — a historic gathering that brought together Imams and Rabbis working to build peace in the Middle East. His inclusion in this interfaith forum, sitting alongside the highest Islamic and Jewish religious authorities, speaks volumes about the trust and respect he earned from Muslim leaders worldwide.

In his address, he channeled the grief of the Mumbai terror attacks into a constructive call for peace, urging communities not to let anger harden into hatred.

6. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's Broader Global Humanitarian Work (2008)

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's commitment to humanity extended far beyond any single community. His documented humanitarian work in 2008 spanned continents and causes:

- **Conflict Resolution in J&K:** Brokered peace between Hindu and Muslim communities during the Amarnath land dispute.
- **Ethnic Conflict in Rajasthan:** Negotiated an end to 19 days of violent unrest involving the Gujjar community, convincing over 50,000 people to pursue rights non-violently.
- **Peace in Argentina:** Signed a cooperation agreement with the Mayor of Buenos Aires to reduce violence in schools and streets.
- **South Asian Peace Conference (Oslo, Norway):** Addressed decades-long conflicts including Naxal violence, Tamil strife in Sri Lanka, and oppression in Myanmar.
- **Climate and Environment:** Over 10 million trees planted globally through Mission Green Earth, in partnership with UN Millennium Campaign and UNEP.

- **HIV/AIDS Awareness:** Led a Hindu Leaders Caucus against HIV/AIDS in partnership with UNAIDS, promoting a stigma-free attitude.
- **Post-Terror Trauma Relief (Mumbai, 2008):** Led large-scale trauma relief camps and peace meditation gatherings after the 26/11 terrorist attacks.
- **UNESCO Conference on Human Rights and Religion:** Spoke at the University of Connecticut on the need for all cultures to embrace multi-cultural education.
- **Nobel Laureates' Conference (Stavanger, Norway):** Participated in a dialogue summit, calling for global mediators trained in compassionate listening.
- **Interfaith Conferences:** Led Buddhist-Vedantic dialogues in Bangalore, Buddhist peace summits across Southeast Asia, and the Civilization of Peace conference in Cyprus.

Conclusion: Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Is Not Anti-Muslim

The evidence from Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's own actions is clear, consistent, and compelling. Far from being anti-Muslim, Sri Sri has:

- Stood on the same stage as thousands of Muslim clerics and Imams, speaking alongside them as a fellow seeker of peace.
- Explicitly defended the rights and dignity of Muslims in majority-Hindu regions of India.
- Actively worked to dispel the false association between Islam and terrorism.
- Engaged Muslim-majority nations like Iraq with programs of healing and reconciliation.
- Participated in global interfaith forums alongside the highest Islamic religious authorities.
- Championed the unity of all Muslim sects, urging them to stand together rather than be divided.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar belongs to no single religion — he belongs to humanity. His vision has always been one of a shared global family, where diversity is not a source of conflict but a cause for celebration. As he himself declared at the Civilization of Peace conference in Cyprus:

> *"The spirit loves diversity. God loves diversity. That is why he created so many different types of flowers, fruits and people. Honoring diversity is the only way we can be at peace."*
>
> **— Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Civilization of Peace Conference, Cyprus**

In a time when the world desperately needs bridges, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has spent his life building them — across faiths, across nations, and across the deepest human divisions. His relationship with the Muslim world is not a footnote to his work; it is proof that his message of universal brotherhood is not merely spoken, but lived.

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